

## Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 LAGOS 05002 201559Z  
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00  
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03  
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 MCT-01 HA-05 /054 W  
-----104441 201600Z /43  
O 201517Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8023  
INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN  
AMCONSUL KADUNA IMMEDIATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LAGOS 5002

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, PINT, NI  
SUBJECT: NORTHERN MEMBERS TO RETURN TO ASSEMBLY

REF: (A) LAGOS 4919, (B) KADUNA 500

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING OBASANJO'S APRIL 19  
SPEECH TO CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY (CA) NORTHERN  
MEMBERS REPORTEDLY DECIDED TO RETURN TO CA  
WHEN IT RECONVENES MONDAY, APRIL 24. NEW  
NIGERIAN ALSO REPORTS THAT SULTAN OF SOKOTO  
OFFERED PRAYERS MONDAY APRIL 17 FOR PEACE AND  
STABILITY AND SUPPORTED CA MEMBERS WHO ARE  
DOING THEIR BEST ON SHARIA ISSUES, NOTING THAT  
RIGHTS OF MUSLIMS WOULD BE GIVEN ADEQUATE  
ATTENTION. CA APPEARS TO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY  
WEATHERED STORM OF NORTHERN WALKOUT; HOWEVER,  
KEY ISSUE OF WHETHER ADDITIONAL CHANGES WILL BE  
MADE IN CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS RE SHARIA

IS STILL UNANSWERED. END SUMMARY.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 LAGOS 05002 201559Z

2. IN IMPRESSIVE SPEECH BEFORE CA APRIL 19  
(TEXT TRANSMITTED SEPTTEL) OBASANJO REMINDED CA  
MEMBERS THAT "THOSE ELEMENTS IN OUR NATIONAL LIFE  
WHICH.....LED TO NEAR DISSOLUTION OF THIS GREAT  
NATION ARE ONLY A STONE'S THROW AWAY....."  
HE CHASTISED CA MEMEBERS SAYING, ".....ACTIONS AND  
UTTERANCES OF SOME MEMBERS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE

THE ASSEMBLY ARE POINTING IN THE DIRECTION OF THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE LAST 17 YEARS REPEATING ITSELF....(YOU) HAVE EITHER FAILED TO SUFFICIENTLY APPRECIATE THE CONSEQUENCES OF PROMOTING DIVISION IN THIS COUNTRY OF YOUR LACKHHE WILL, THE EXPERIENCE, AND WHEREWITHAL OF A GOOD STATESMAN RATHER THAN A POLITICIAN....(IN) THE EVENT OF A BREAKDOWN OF LAW AND ORDER....IT WILL BE THE COMMON PEOPLE WHO WILL SUFFER. THOSE OF YOU WHO UNDERSTAND THE REAL MOTIVE BEHIND YOUR ACTIONS, ATTITUDES AND UTTERANCES WILL FLY INTO SAFETY AND USE THE COMMON MAN AS CANNON FODDER....(WHEN) THE DUST IS SETTLED YOU WILL EMERGE UNSCRATCHED."

3. OBASANJO CONCLUDED WITH AN APPEAL AND REASSURANCES OF RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE: "....IN THE NAME OF NIGERIA AND ALL NIGERIANS WHO LOVE PEACE AND LOVE THIS COUNTRY, IN THE NAME OF WHAT IS DEAREST TO EACH AND EVERYONE OF YOU, AND IN THE NAME OF GOD, I APPEAL TO ALL OF YOU TO CONTINUE YOUR DELIBERATIONS ON THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION IN THE ATMOSPHERE OF HARMONY AND CONCORD AND IN THE SPIRIT OF LOVE, TOLERANCE AND UNDERSTANDING. WE ARE COMMITTED TO RETURNING THIS COUNTRY TO CIVIL RULE IN 1979 AND ALSO ENSURING THAT PEACE AND TRANQUILITY REIGN SUPREME IN A POLITICALLY UNITED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 LAGOS 05002 201559Z

AND CONSTITUTIONALLY STRONG NIGERIA."

4. ACCORDING TO DAILY TIMES, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING OBASANJO'S ADDRESS NORTHERN CA MEMBERS DECIDED TO END BOYCOTT OF CA WHEN IT RECONVENES MONDAY APRIL 24. ACCORDING TO REPORT THERE WAS DISAGREEMENT OVER "CONDITIONS" FOR RETURNING TO THE ASSEMBLY, BUT IT WAS AGREED THEY WOULD & "WORJ CLOSELY" WITH THE REST OF THE CA TO REOPEN DEBATE ON THE SHARIA QUESTION. THE NORTHERNERS, HOWEVER, REPORTEDLY PLEDGED TO ABIDE BY THE DECISION OF THE FULL ASSEMBLY ON THE SHARIA AND OTHER ISSUES.

5. NEW NIGERIAN ALSO REPORTED THAT ON MONDAY, APRIL 17, BEFORE CURRENT BROUHAHA REACHED CRISIS PROPORTIONS, THE SULTAN OF SOKOTO WHO IS PRESIDENT-GENERAL OF THE JAMA-ATU NASIL ISLAM AND OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF ISLAMIC AFFAIRS APPEALED TO ALL MUSLIMS IN NIGERIA TO "DISCARD" RUMORS THAT THE SHARIA LAW WOULD NOT BE ENTRENCHED IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION. HE URGED CALM AND RESTRAINT, EXPLAINING THAT CA MEMBERS WERE DOING THEIR BEST

ON THE SHARIA ISSUES AND THAT THE RIGHTS OF MUSLIMS  
WOULD BE GIVEN ADEQUATE ATTENTION. HE CALLED FOR  
CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN  
THE COUNTRY.

6. COMMENT: IF TIMES IS CORRECT, THE DECISION OF NORTHERN  
MEMBERS TO END THEIR WALKOUT WILL AT LEAST TEMPORARILY  
DEFUSE THE CURRENT CRISIS IN THE CA. THE SOURCE  
OF THE PROBLEM HAS NOT YET BEEN DEALT WITH, HOWEVER.  
UNLESS OUTSIDE PRESSURE IS APPLIED TO ASSEMBLY WE  
DOUBT THAT CURRENT SHARIA PROVISION WILL BE CHANGED.  
AS NOTED EARLIER MOST SOUTHERN AND MIDDLE BELT  
MEMBERS VIEW THE ISSUE AS SETTLED. ON THE OTHER HAND,  
IF SOUTHERN MEMBERS WHO SAY MANY NORTHERNERS  
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 LAGOS 05002 201559Z

WANTED TO RETURN BUT WERE PREVENTED BY POLITICAL  
REASONS FOR DOING SO ARE CORRECT, OBASANJO'S APPEAL  
MAY HAVE SOLVED THE LONGER TERM PROBLEM. IF  
NORTHERNERS DO ACCEPT CURRENT DRAFT, THE FAR NORTH  
WILL HAVE ADMITTED DEFEAT AND OFFERED PROOF OF  
ITS DECREASED POWER IN THE NEW CIVILIAN CONSTITU-  
TIONAL SYSTEM.  
WYMAN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** SPEECHES, CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 20 apr 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978LAGOS05002  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780169-0439  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** LAGOS  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780436/aaaabduj.tel  
**Line Count:** 144  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 156879aa-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 78 LAGOS 4919, 78 KADUNA 500  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 29 apr 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2904871  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** NORTHERN MEMBERS TO RETURN TO ASSEMBLY  
**TAGS:** PGOV, PDEV, PINT, NI, (OBASANJO, OLUSEGUN)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/156879aa-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014